

Negotiating Local Protection and Emplacement: A Case Study from the Zambia-Angolan Borderlands

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Over many years, the formal policy of Zambian government has a) required refugees to live in officially recognised settlements and b) offered no route to citizenship for those who enter the country as refugees. For long term refugees such as those from Angola, this appears to be a recipe for keeping people in a precarious position over generations. Nonetheless, many thousands of those who fled the civil war in Angola remained living in Zambian villages far from the settlements and they have effectively acquired citizenship. Drawing on fieldwork over the last 14 years, this paper will explore how the Angolans negotiated their own of protection in collaboration with local chiefs to create a ‘space of belonging’ which is now belatedly being recognised by the state. This can be contrasted with the ‘displacement culture’ which is evident in the formal settlements.